

June 30, 2011

South Dakota Department of the Military  
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

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## GENERAL REISCH APPLAUDS THE COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT OF EMPLOYERS

Hundreds of our South Dakota National Guardsmen have been activated to respond to flooding this year, and their employers and families have had to endure extended periods of absences.

We ask a lot from our National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and they have responded expeditiously in every situation they have been called.

We wouldn't be able to respond without the full support of their civilian employers and we thank each and every employer for their support, past, present and future. We thank them for being such an integral part of the Guard community. This incredible support we receive continues to solidify the partnership between our employees, their employers and the South Dakota National Guard.

Soldiers and Airmen are asked to serve for days, weeks, or often a year at a time. Whether the deployments are here at home or overseas, businesses large and small contribute to the needs of our state and nation by allowing their citizen-Soldiers and Airmen to serve.

I want to personally thank our employers, communities, neighbors, friends and families for their tireless support of the South Dakota National Guard. We have been in this flood fight together every step of the way, and we stand committed to our local and state partners, employers, Soldiers, Airmen and their families.

Your South Dakota National Guard is "always ready, and always there," thanks in large part to the commitment, support, and patriotism of our employers. *Thank you.*

Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch  
The Adjutant General for the South Dakota National Guard.



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## BIKERS RENDEZVOUS TO BENEFIT VETERANS

Hot Springs, the renowned Veterans town, is getting ready to rumble with its own rally and races to kick off the Sturgis Rally week. Most Black Hills communities are taking advantage of the spillover of riders throughout the region with biker-friendly activities. This event, just 80 miles south of Sturgis on Hwy 79, is becoming the premiere bike event in the Southern Hills.

Southern Hills Rally events begin on Saturday, August 6, at 2:00 pm, with a motorcycle rodeo at the American Legion Clubhouse, a Show-N-Shine and Swap Meet in Centennial Park, beer garden and booths, and a dance that evening at the American Legion. There will be discounts and special offers from many local retailers.

All bikers are welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Fall River Freedom Ride, a benefit Poker Run benefiting the Michael J. Fitzmaurice South Dakota State Veterans Home. Bikers gather at the State Veterans Home (2500 Minnekahta Avenue) on Sunday where there is a Church Service beginning at 8:30 am and registration for the poker run beginning at 9:00 am. Breakfast will be available. Kick-off for the poker ride is at 11:00 am with a flag parade through town, led by a military escort. Registration fees are \$15 for the first poker hand and \$10 for the second one. The purse is split 50-50 with the State Veterans Home. The parade itself is an event the public will not want to miss.

Following the Poker Run, prizes will be given out at the American Legion Clubhouse. Vendor space is also available in selected areas of Hot Springs during this event. If you or anyone you know is interested in marketing their wares in Hot Springs during this time, contact Cheryl Wait at [hscity@gwtc.net](mailto:hscity@gwtc.net).



## SOUTH DAKOTA TO RECEIVE FUNDS TO ASSIST HOMEOWNERS

On June 20, 2011, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development announced that South Dakota will be receiving \$2,051,563 to assist homeowners through the Emergency Homeowner's Loan Program (EHLP). EHLP funds are part of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.

South Dakota Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) was one of fifty-two grantees from NeighborWorks® America to receive funding. EHLP funds will help homeowners who are at least 90 days late on their mortgage payments, and unemployed or working fewer hours because of the economy or a medical condition.

If qualified for assistance under EHLP and selected, homeowners will be able to access an interest free loan to help pay arrearages and a portion of their monthly mortgage payments up to 24 months or \$50,000, whichever comes first. Funds are limited and not all eligible applicants may receive funding. Eligible homeowners have until Friday, July 22, 2011 to complete the pre-applicant screening worksheet. After the July 22 application date, a lottery process will be used to determine which applicants will receive funding. The worksheets are available by calling one of the following participating counseling agencies:

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of the Black Hills (Phone: 800.568.6615)

Consumer Credit Counseling Service-Lutheran Social Services (Phone: 800.568.2401)

Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership (Phone: 800.896.4103)

For more information contact Mary Stewart at SDHDA (605-773-3181).

## VETERANS OUTREACH

On Friday, June 24, veterans in southeastern South Dakota were provided a great opportunity to meet with various entities and agencies that provide programs and services to South Dakota's veterans.

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care Center, Dakotas VA Regional Office, Department of Labor, Social Services, Rural Office of Community Services, Job Corps, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Vets Center, service organizations and community businesses and agencies were on site to assist veterans. The event also offered on-the-spot help such as blood pressure screenings, financial and economic information, community housing referral, employment and training assistance, readjustment counseling and information on veterans benefits.

Over 40 veterans stopped and visited with Country and Tribal Veterans Service Officers Roy Farabee (Charles Mix and Gregory Counties), Lowell McFarland (Douglas County), Rich Beringer (Bon Homme County), Steve McClure (Davison County) and Dennis Rucker (Yankton Sioux Tribe).

Ralph Sowder was also on site and briefed veterans on the Michael J Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, as well as the Veterans Honored Interment.

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Field Officer Kevin Bowen was also on hand and assisted veterans on filing claims as well as briefed veterans on the services and benefits that they have earned.

The VA offered some Army surplus clothing, including gloves, boots and jackets.





## CLAUSSEN ATTENDS SERVICE ORGANIZATION'S CONVENTIONS

Director Claussen recently attended the South Dakota VFW's annual convention in Sioux Falls and the South Dakota American Legion's convention in Oacoma.

At both conventions, Claussen briefed attendees on the 2011 legislative session, the State Veterans Home and the Governors' executive order to divide the South Dakota Department of Military and Veterans Affairs into two new departments—the South Dakota Department of the Military and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs.

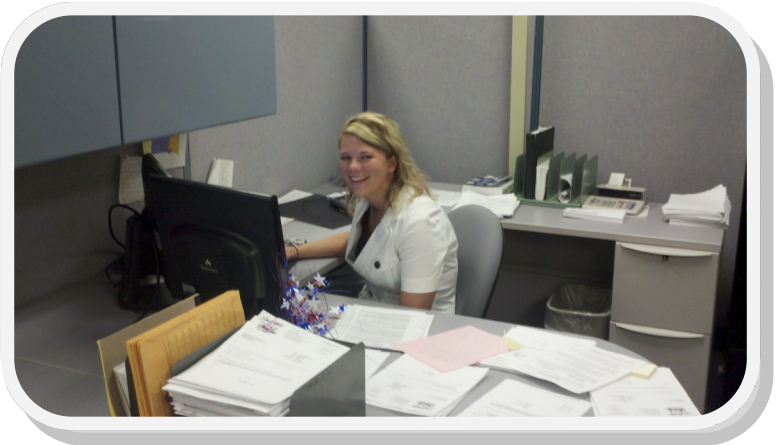
Both of these events allowed Director Claussen the opportunity to visit one-on-one with members of the service organizations, as well as hear reports from some of the other speakers.



## BOEVE JOINS THE CLAIMS OFFICE

Regina Boeve joins the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs team. Originally from Germany, Boeve moved to Sioux Falls about five years ago. Regina will serve as the veterans claims examiner in the claims office in Sioux Falls.

Regina and her husband Cole have a nine-month old daughter, Isabella. Regina is very excited to be a part of the claims office staff, and is looking forward to learning new things and meeting new people.



## STATE OFFICES TO BE CLOSED

State offices will be closed on Monday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day.



# STATE BROADBAND INITIATIVE



The South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications (BIT) announced the launch of <http://broadband.sd.gov> – a website for South Dakotans to learn about high-speed broadband technology and offer direct input on the State Broadband Initiative (SBI).

The primary goal of SBI is to inventory broadband availability, but it has many other purposes. Broadband commonly refers to high-speed Internet access that is always on.

Broadband is a foundation for economic growth, job creation, global competitiveness and a better way of life. High-speed broadband is very important to the future of South Dakota, individuals and businesses alike have a vested interest in expanding the South Dakota economy, and high-speed technology will be an important part of that success."

The first phase of the State Broadband Initiative was creating, verifying, and updating a comprehensive statewide map of broadband availability. The map was produced by a collaborative effort with South Dakota broadband providers.

The interactive website ( <http://broadband.sd.gov/Mapping.aspx> ) allows people to enter specific addresses and determine what broadband services are available at those locations. The pre-built maps show broadband availability in South Dakota across a variety of wired and wireless technologies. Beyond reviewing the most up-to-date maps at <http://broadband.sd.gov>, South Dakotans have the opportunity to get directly involved in the project. People who visit the website will find information about the initiative and the benefits of broadband; they can test the speed of their Internet connections; take a survey; report public Wi-Fi "hot spots" and even report areas where broadband is not available.

The public is encouraged to go online, learn about the project, and get actively involved. Active involvement of South Dakota citizens will help improve high-speed Internet capabilities for everyone.



## A NATION'S STRENGTH (BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON)

What makes a nation's pillars high  
And its foundations strong?  
What makes it mighty to defy  
The foes that round it throng?

It is not gold. Its kingdoms grand  
Go down in battle shock;  
Its shafts are laid on sinking sand,  
Not on abiding rock.

Is it the sword? Ask the red dust  
Of empires passed away;  
The blood has turned their stones to rust,  
Their glory to decay.

And is it pride? Ah, that bright crown  
Has seemed to nations sweet;  
But God has struck its luster down  
In ashes at his feet.

Not gold but only men can make  
A people great and strong;  
Men who for truth and honor's sake  
Stand fast and suffer long.

Brave men who work while others sleep,  
Who dare while others fly...  
They build a nation's pillars deep  
And lift them to the sky.



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